

AGENDA ITEM: 16

SUBJECT:

Contested Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) for Pacific Gas and Electric, Former Geothermal Inc. Landfill, Lake County – Consideration of New Waste Discharge Requirements

BOARD ACTION:

Consideration of new WDRs

BACKGROUND:

Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E, Discharger) owns and operates the **15-acre** former Geothermal Inc. Facility, Class II landfill (facility) in Middletown, Lake County. The facility is an unlined closed landfill surrounded by tree plantations on three sides and classified as a Class II waste management unit for the discharge of drilling mud and geothermal wastes.

The facility historically consisted of seven unlined surface impoundments (ponds) and three unlined disposal trenches to accept waste produced from geothermal exploration, steam power generation and other geothermal related activities from 1976 to 1987. The Regional Board issued Cease and Desist (C&D) Order No. 84-076 requiring Geothermal Inc. to retrofit all surface impoundments with double liners and leachate collection systems, identify all areas of surface water and groundwater pollution, and to submit cleanup or containment plans.

Pursuant to Cleanup and Abatement Order (CAO) R5-2002-0204, the facility was closed as a landfill by consolidating waste into single continuous landfill in 2006. The facility complied with all the requirements of the CAO except the requirement to maintain five feet of separation between waste to groundwater. The groundwater in the vicinity of the former ponds has been impacted with inorganic constituents of concern (COCs) including boron, sulfate, chloride and total dissolve solids (TDS). All feasibility studies and evaluations conducted since 2002 concluded that it is not technically or economically feasible to achieve five feet of groundwater separation.

These WDRs set the background concentration limits as the corrective action goal and assign a threat and complexity rating of 2-B to the facility which was not established in the past. The WDRs require the discharger to perform additional work related to reducing infiltration of stormwater as part of the corrective action for the facility.

ISSUES:

Comments were received during the comment period and during in person public outreach conducted by Central Valley Water Board staff. Comments were received from members of the public, the Middletown Rancheria, and the Callayomi County Water District. Changes were made to the required analytical suite based on comments received.

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt the new WDRs.

REVIEWS:

Management Review:	BSS
Legal Review:	DL
Date:	10/11 October 2019
Board Meeting Street Address:	777 Cypress Avenue
Board Meeting City, State, Zip:	Redding, CA 96001